

Evil and the Justice of God

Chapter 4: Imagine There's No Evil: God's Promise of a World Set Free

February 2, 2025

How would you define sin? Evil? Death?

What does Wright mean when he says that the church's task is to *implement* and *anticipate* the future God is already bringing about through the cross of Christ? (see pp. 102-103)

Explain the *dualism/progressivism* polarities described by Wright and how they err in, or fall short of, addressing evil in the world.

"When you worship an idol, whatever it is, you abdicate something of your own proper human authority over the world and give it instead to that thing, whatever it is. You call into being a negative force, and anti-God force which is opposed to creation because, being itself part of the transient world, it is bound to decay and die and will, if we're not careful, drag us down with it." (p. 112)

- Where in human history have you seen this sort of idolatry play itself out on the scale of nations and empires? What was the result of their idolatry?
- What examples of this do you see in the present day?

"The Bible doesn't give us a picture of the ultimate future as a world of disembodied spirits or cherubs on clouds...It's much more solid, much more real, than that." (p. 115)

- What are the implications of such a statement for the church?
- Why does Wright say that Romans 8 is the "deepest New Testament answer to the 'problem of evil,' to the question of God's justice"?

Intermediate Tasks...

1. Prayer
2. Holiness
3. Politics and empire
4. Penal codes
5. International disputes

Comment on these tasks and why Wright says we should be practicing them now in response to evil in the world, and as an example of implementing and anticipating God's future.

"The Christian is under obligation both to honor the ruling authority, whatever it may be, and to work constantly to remind that authority of its God-given task, and to encourage and help it to perform that primary task: to do justice and love mercy, to ensure that those who are weak and vulnerable are properly looked after." (p. 122)

- How does one live this out when Christians have opposing assessments of the ruling authority—where some see that authority as God-sent and others see it as anti-Gospel?